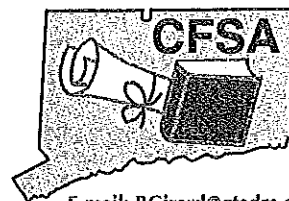




CONNECTICUT FEDERATION OF
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS
AFSA - AFL-CIO



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February 23, 2009

To: Senator Thomas Gaffey
Representative Andrew Fleischmann
Co-Chairman Education Committee
And
Members of the Education Committee

From: Roch J. Girard
President

RE: Support for the following Bills:

Raised Bill No. 942: AAC establishing a date certain for Student Notification of Attendance at an Interdistrict Magnet School.

We believe that there should be a specific timeline which informs schools and regional boards of education of students who wish to attend Interdistrict Magnet schools. This is a major cost factor in determining budgetary considerations for LEA, and it should minimize unplanned costs associated with students attending these Interdistrict magnet Schools.

Raised Bill No. 943: AAC Establishing a Uniform Start Date for Connecticut Public Schools.

The beginning of the student school year and the need for a uniform beginning date has long been a topic of heated discussion. Many believe that this issue should fall exclusively on the LEA to determine, while others speak to uniformity throughout the state. We lean toward "home rule" on this matter because the LEA's know their community and what works best for the overall operation; needs and commitments; and specific characteristic of the community in the districts. One size does not fit all!

Raised Bill No. 945: AAC World Language Requirements:

We realize that this bill is an attempt to bring in the new High School Reforms recommended by the Commissioner of Education and the SBE. Requiring two credits in world language for ALL students in order to graduate raises many questions. Though the concept is a good one, not every High School student will be able to comply with this requirement. Are special needs children and ESL students obligated to take these two credit courses? We are also concerned about the cost factor to the LEA's in providing this requirement.

Raised Bill No. 946: AAC Interdistrict Magnet Schools.

We agree that the further construction and development of additional Interdistrict magnet schools be placed on hold pending a careful and comprehensive statewide review by the Commissioner of Education on the need for and use of a new Interdistrict school(Unless the school is part of the Sheff-O'Neill decision). The cost of these magnet schools and the fiscal and curricular, staffing and student impact on the existing schools within a district from which student leave for an Interdistrict magnet school - needs to be reviewed.

Raised Bill No. 947: AAC High School Credit for Approved Online Coursework.

One major concern we have concerning this bill are obvious ones- the content, who is teaching the course, the quality of the course and most importantly - the monitoring process.

Raised Bill No 6496: AAC Green Cleaning Products In Schools.

We are very supportive of this bill. The "Green Movement" is the wave of the future. As educators we hold no greater charge that the safety and welfare and health of students, parents, staff and the general public who use our schools on a YEARLY basis. Schools are no longer used only for education purposes- from 8:00-3:00 PM. Before and after school activities, evening, and even weekend use of our schools is now common practice.

Using green cleaning products makes sense. They are a true and tested. We should quickly replace hazardous products and chemicals that may still be in use in some of our schools. The science is now available. We know what type of cleaning fluids should and should not be used in schools.

As a member of the Connecticut School Indoor Environment Resource Team, we are very concerned about Indoor Air Quality (IAC) issues. Support for this bill comes from a host of organizations and people deeply committed to the use of safe cleaning products in our schools. CFSA wholeheartedly and most enthusiastically supports this bill.

Thank you.

C: CFSA Officers
Members of the executive Board